

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-10 and 23-29 are pending in the present application. Claims 11-22 have been withdrawn. In view of the Examiner's earlier restriction requirement, Applicants retain the right to present Claims 11-22 and not yet claimed subject matter in one or more divisional applications. Claims 1-10 and 23-29 have been rejected.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the telephone interview on June 9, 2004. Claims 1 and 23 have been amended as discussed to overcome the Examiner's rejections thereto. As amended, claims 1 and 23 specifically point out that aspect of the invention wherein the anode and cathode gas flow passages each have a unique geometry of varying cross-section and width across the interconnect sufficient to effect local variations in flow direction, velocity, and turbulence. By varying the cross-section of the channels, the pattern density and shape of the gas flow passages compensate for gas concentration changes and temperature changes across the fuel flow field. The Examiner stated that he believed this amendment would overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102, but believed that it may require further consideration or search. Applicants proposed adding figures to further illustrate embodiments showing exemplary gas flow passages having a unique geometry of varying cross-section and width across the interconnect. These features are supported by the original application as filed and do not encompass new matter. Applicants agreed to point out the support in the specification for the newly added figures.

Upon entry of the present Amendment, Applicants believe Claims 1-10 and 23-29 and are in condition for allowance. FIGS. 5-18 have been added. No new matter has been entered thereby. Support for the instant claim amendments, amendments to the specification, and newly added FIGS. 5-18 may be found in the specification as filed, for example, at page 7, lines 2-5, at page 7, lines 29-31, and page 8, lines 1-5, as well as

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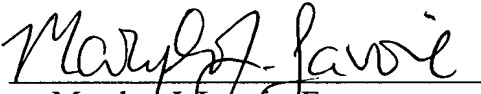
elsewhere throughout the application. Support for FIG. 18 may be found in the specification as filed, for example, at page 9, lines 2-6.

Based upon the remarks presented herein, it is submitted that the Examiner's outstanding rejections have been overcome. As a result, Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Should the Examiner have any questions regarding this matter, the Examiner is requested to contact Mr. Jimmy L. Funke, who may be reached in the Troy, Michigan area at (248) 813-1214.

If there are any charges with respect to this Response or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 50-0831 maintained by Applicants' attorney.

Respectfully submitted,
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